

7-2-1939
NEWS GAZETTE

THE NEWS-GAZETTE

Roy Argo Surrenders Chief Of Police Badge After 21 Years Of Service To Champaign

By ED BORMAN

A period of more than 21 years of service in the Champaign police department ended Saturday for Chief Roy Argo when he turned over his badge to his successor, Captain Clyde Davis.

For the first time since April 20, 1918, the 54-year-old chief went to his home completely free from complaints and telephone calls that might bring him back to work at any hour of the day or night.

He had no immediate plans for spending his newly-acquired spare time. Some of it will have to be given over to rest—his physician insists on that. Would he spend part of it reminiscing? "Sure," he admitted—21 eventful years had given him a lot to recall—but he added, "I'm principally interested in finding something worthwhile to occupy my time. Of course I expect to remain in Champaign."

Chief Argo had only this to say in summarizing his police career:

"The only things I attempted to do were to enforce the law fairly, treat everyone alike, and always do what I thought was best for Champaign."

Joined Force In 1918

And the man on the streets in Champaign—who had known Roy Argo as a courageous, thorough-going, sound-reasoning police officer—agreed with him.

Argo joined the police force in 1918 and served six years as patrolman and motorcycle officer. In 1924 he was promoted to captain and on April 1, 1932 he succeeded Chief H. U. Keller as the chief law enforcement officer in the city. He held that position until Saturday when he accepted the retirement pension he had earned.



A gold chief's badge replaced the silver captain's badge on the shirt of Clyde Davis Saturday as he succeeded Roy Argo as Cham-

paign's chief of police. Argo (right) pinned his badge on Davis and thereby officially ending his career as a law enforcement

official. Argo was retired after 21 years of service. Davis served as captain under Argo for seven years.

FORMER POLICE CHIEF ARGO DIES IN SOUTHWEST

Roy Argo, retired chief of the Champaign police department, is dead at age 65.

His body is being returned here from Phoenix, Ariz., but funeral arrangements had not been completed Tuesday.

The ex-chief dropped dead Monday when he suffered a heart attack while working in the yard of a new home he built in Phoenix two years ago. He had made his home in Phoenix since he retired from the police department 10 years ago. He had visited here numerous times since his retirement and appeared in good health when he was here this summer.

Mr. Argo served on the police force for 21 years, and was chief during years when the department was expanded rapidly. He joined the force April 20, 1918, and served as a motorcycle officer until he became night captain in 1924. As captain he directed the night force until he became chief



ROY ARGO

**Retired Champaign
chief of police dies . . .**

In 1932, when Chief A. U. Keller resigned shortly before his death.

Retired in 1939

Mr. Argo headed the department until he retired on pension Aug. 20, 1939, and was succeeded by Clyde R. Davis, who served under him as captain.

He is survived by his widow, the former Minnie Alice Sweet, and five daughters, Mrs. Albert Martin of near Rantoul; Mrs. William E. Willey of Phoenix; Mrs. Eugene Schockney and Mrs. Bernice Irlie, both of Anderson, Ind.; and Mrs. Chet Pennington of Auburn.

He was born Jan. 1, 1885, at St. Joseph. His first wife, the former Mattie Wright, died in 1925. He was married in 1929 to the wife who survives him. His only brother, Ray, died this year at Terre Haute, Ind.

Champaign police expect to serve as pallbearers at the funeral service.

Solved Many Cases

Chief Argo played a prominent role in many of the police department's toughest cases. He figured prominently in the solution of the Carmody murder case, which attracted national attention, the bold robbery of the Harris mansion during a football party, a \$10,000 theft of furs from the Carpenter store, and the break-up of a safe-cracking gang, along with numerous other cases.

As a rookie patrolman, he was shot in the right shoulder while arresting a man at First street and University avenue.

Chief Davis said Tuesday, "Chief Argo was more feared among the underworld than any police officer I've known. He had a way of getting information when no one else could. We who served under him learned early that if we followed his advice, we usually would come out on top."

Minnie A. Argo

Mrs. Minnie A. Argo, 83, a Phoenix resident 25 years, died Monday in a Phoenix hospital.

Mrs. Argo, who moved here from Champagne, Ill., lived at 1646 E. Glenrosa. She was a member of Palmycroft Baptist Church.

Services and burial will be in Rantoul, Ill. Friends may call at Mercer Mortuary, 1541 E. Thomas, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. today.

Surviving are five daughters, Mrs. Minnie Willey of Phoenix, Mrs. Frances Pennington of Auburn, Ill., Mrs. Clara Shockney of Anderson, Ind., Mrs. Olive Martin of Rantoul, and Mrs. Bernice Irlie of Thomasboro, Ill., six grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Argo was born in Farmer City, Ill.

HEUSCHKE CHAMPAIGN CO. IL 4-20-49



ROY ARGO



MAMA'S HOME IN
PHOENIX



MAMA SWEET



MAMA SWEET

Before he became a policeman, Argo was employed at the South farm on the University of Illinois campus. He has lived in Champaign for 49 years.

As he left the department, the retiring chief voiced a "wish for all the success in the world" for Captain Davis in his new position. Expresses "Thanks"

"I'll be glad to do anything I can for Chief Davis, for the police department, or anyone else in town," he said.

The important thing he had to say, he declared, was "thanks" to "all the citizens and businessmen who have given me such strong co-operation. They were a wonderful help to me while I was in office."

The same expression of "thanks" went to the members of the police department who had worked under him.

"Some of the best police officers in the state are in the Champaign police department," the chief asserted. "They will go places and really do things if they are put in the right places."

The Champaign police department grew greatly as Roy Argo grew with it. When he took his place in it as a rookie, the department was a six-man outfit.

Patrolled On Bicycle

Only Argo, Captain Mike Wagner (now a night watchman in Chicago), and Charles Richards (now a University employee) remain of the crew that patrolled Champaign streets in 1918.

A policeman's life in those days was a little difficult, Argo recalled. When he began, he patrolled his beat— comprised of the entire city of Champaign—on a bicycle. His

only contact with headquarters was an hourly telephone call.

Sometimes the system didn't work so well.

"For instance," he explained, "I would get a call about a noisy drunk in the north end of town. When I pedalled up there I would arrest the drunk and take him to the gashouse which offered the nearest telephone. All too often by the time John Garrett got there with his paddy wagon there was a chance the drunk would either have me licked or would have sobered up enough so that I would be criticized for arresting a sober man."

Have 18 Men Now

When Argo left the department as chief it had an 18-man force, patrolling beats in new squad cars, and in constant communication with headquarters by two-way radio.

It is a difficult thing to get information such as the following from Chief Argo, but from persons who were close to the police department during his career it is not hard to learn that:

Most outstanding was his treatment of juvenile cases. Here he applied the philosophy that "It's much easier and much better to stop juvenile delinquency before it starts." There were few juvenile arrests and fewer prosecutions but there are no doubt a lot of people in Champaign-Urbana today who remember lectures they received as youngsters from Policeman Argo.

Every person who contacted the police department received courteous treatment. This was in line with the chief's order: "Be courteous to everyone—It makes no difference if he is a preacher or a crook."

He Got Results

Other law enforcement agencies



ROY ARGO

... as a patrolman

received sincere co-operation from Argo's police department. Former sheriffs, federal agents, parole and probation officers, and school officials gladly bear witness to that statement.

No prisoner was mistreated while he was in custody.

The chief got results. A list of important cases credited to him include the tip that resulted in the apprehension of Jules Hopkins, wanted throughout the mid-west for murder and robberies; solution of the famous Knox-Carmody deaths; and numerous large robberies.



H. Filmore
and
Martha



FRANCE

MARTHA SWEET DICKERSON
SWEET-COFFIN GRANDCHILDREN



POST CARD

▲ ▲ Z O ▲
▲ PLACE ▲
■ STAMP ■
O HERE O
▲ ▲ Z O ▲

CORRESPONDENCE HERE

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

Grandma Sweet
& Grandchildren

Walter Coffin

Walter C. Coffin, 71, of 2709 E. High St., U, died at 6:30 a.m. Monday (Dec. 17, 1984) at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana.

Funeral services will be 2 p.m. Thursday at Renner-Wikoff Chapel, Urbana, the Rev. Riley Powell and the Rev. Raymond Burton officiating. Burial will be in Woodlawn Cemetery, Urbana.

Visitation will be from 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday at the funeral home.

Mr. Coffin was born March 28, 1913 at Mahomet, a son of David and Mary Sweet Coffin. He married Inez L. Lane on March 26, 1934, in Champaign County. She died Jan. 6, 1972. He then married Ethel Burton on Oct. 18, 1974, at Urbana. She survives.

Also surviving are five sons, James E. Coffin Sr. of Fisher, Walter C. Coffin Jr. of Champaign, and Karl E. Coffin, Steven J. Coffin and Kevin L. Coffin, all of Urbana; two daughters, Barbara Myhre of Woodlands, Texas, and Edith White of Frossland; two stepsons, Jeffrey Wiegand of Mahomet and Gary Wiegand of Fisher; three stepdaughters, Kathleen Wiegand, Janet Rose and Amy Anders, all of Urbana; 14 grandchildren; four step-grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; a brother, Clifford Coffin of Gifford; and three sisters, Lavilla Haney of Chicago, Alleen Burton of Mayview and Doris Drollinger of Urbana.

He was preceded in death by a grandson, five brothers and a sister.

Mr. Coffin was a retired supervisor at J.M. Jones & Co. He was a former member of the First Baptist Church, Mahomet.



CLIFFORD
JANET
AMY
ALLEN
KARL
STEVEN
JAMES
KEVIN
BARBARA
EDITH
WALTER
DAVID
MARY
INEZ
ETHEL
RAYMOND
RILEY
POWELL

FRANK
SUSAN



Walter Coffin



H. Filmore
and
Martha

MARTHA SWEET DICKERSON
SWEET-COFFIN GRANDCHILDREN

Oak Grove Church



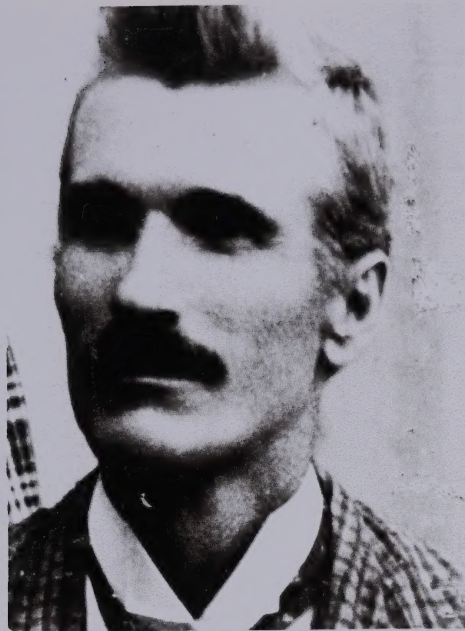
OAK GROVE CHURCH



Sol Coffin - Minnie Sweet
Lizzie Coffin - Francis
Sweet
(left to right)



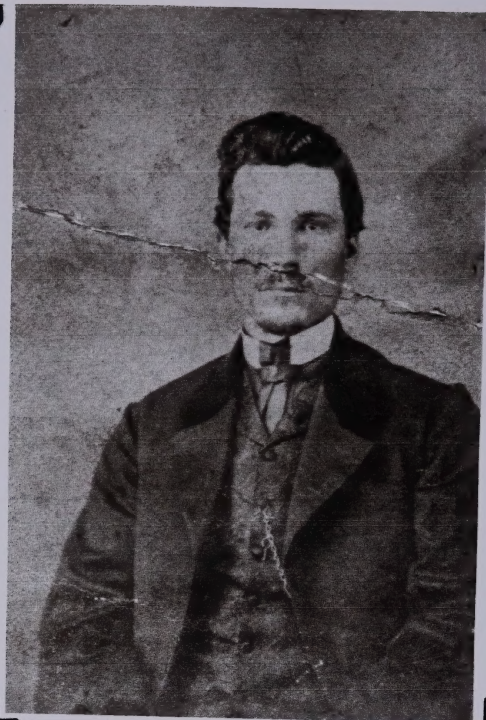
Sweet - Coffin Oct 1909 (Grandchildren)



JOSEPH BENNETT



Isalina
Bennett



Joseph Bennett



Eliza Wilson Bennett
Laura Bennett



Eliza Ann
Joseph with
Carl & Ozley



Bert & Isa Coffin



H. Filmore
and
Martha



MARTHA SWEET DICKERSON
SWEET-COFFIN GRANDCHILDREN



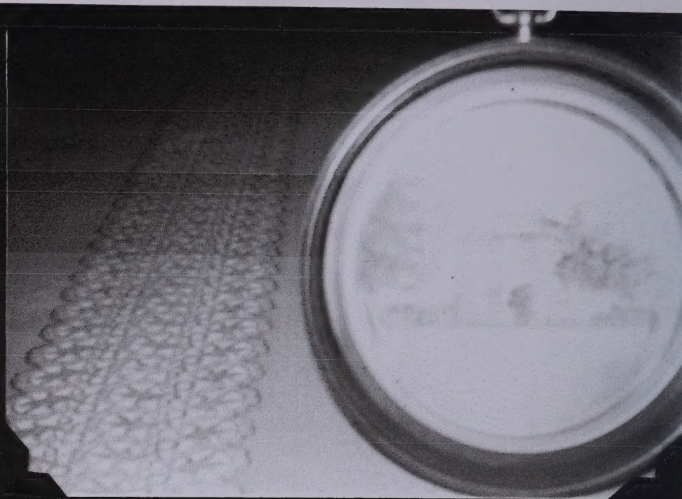
Truman Wright
b. 1780
d. 2-10-1865
Mackey Cemetery, Mansfield, Illinois

MRS. COFFIN DIES ON TUESDAY

Mrs. Isalina Coffin of Urbana died Tuesday morning in the Mercy hospital. She recently submitted to an operation and cancers were found. She was born in Fulton county, Ill., Apr. 22, 1863. She was married June 10, 1889 to James Coffin, who died March 27, 1912.

She leaves eight children, Mrs. J. W. Casler, Mahomet; Earl B. Coffin, Lehigh; Walter Coffin, Gowrie, Ia.; Mrs. Maude Johnston, North Platte, Neb.; Mrs. Mamie Wright, Cleaves, Ohio; Mrs. Minnie Hosier, Ellsworth; Bennett Coffin, Savoy; George Coffin, Urbana. There are also two stepsons, D. S. Coffin, Mahomet; John Coffin, Butterfield, Minn.

The funeral will be held Thursday at two o'clock at Stewart's funeral home, with Rev. Bromley officiating. Burial will be made in Mansfield cemetery.



Mahomet Sucker State
July 9, 1936

Isalina Coffin Obit

Picture of the home where Eliza Bennett & John Clark raised their 16 children. Picture was painted by Dick Collins. Olive Martin has the original.

PATRICIA KNEZ



Clark - Bennett Family 1935

Zelda Collins, Carrie Koehn, Essie Curtis, Elmer Bennett, Mary Parr, Henry Bennett, Harvey Bennett, Minnie Argo, Carl Bennett, Laura Clouser

SEP 75



JOSEPH BENNETT
- ELIZA WILSON "

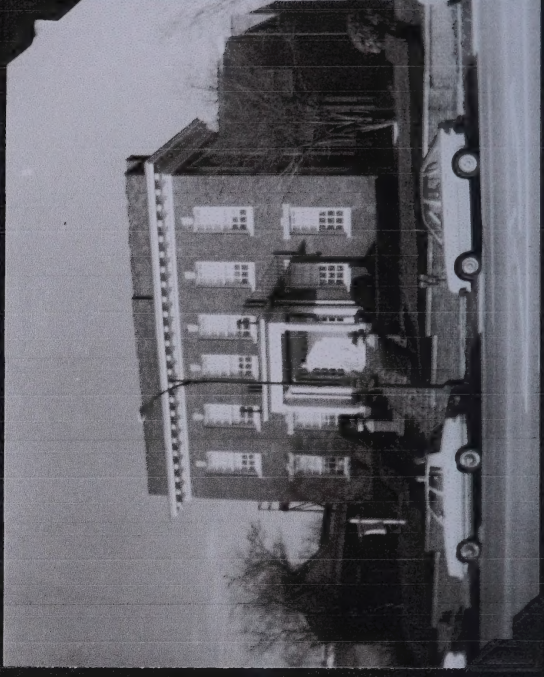
ABRAHAM J. CAIRHERNE
WERE MARRIED AT
LEBANON, WARREN CO. OHIO



Warren Co. OH Courthouse



Golden Lamb Inn, Lebanon OH



Warren Co. Hist. Museum

Masters & Reese, Comp't's Solicitors.
Publication Notice.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, County Court of Fulton
 Fulton County, Ill.
 To the September Term, A. D. 1882.
 Jonathan Barn, Administrator of the Estate of
 Abram Bennett, deceased,
 vs.

Lucy Ann Bennett, et. al.

Petition to sell real estate to pay debts.

AFFIDAVIT of the non-residence of Mary Bennett, Joseph Bennett, Nancy J. Bennett and unknown heirs of Angeline Bennett, deceased, defendants above, having been filed in the office of the clerk of the county court of Fulton county, notice is hereby given to the said Mary Bennett, Joseph Bennett, Nancy J. Bennett, and the unknown heirs of Angeline Bennett, deceased, that the said plaintiff, Jonathan Barn, administrator of the estate of Abram Bennett, deceased, has filed his petition in the said county court of Fulton county, for an order to sell the premises belonging to the estate of said deceased, or so much of it as may be needed to pay the debts of said deceased, and described as follows, to-wit: Fourteen and three fourths acres off the north end of the west half of the north west quarter of the north east quarter of section forty ten, in township 44 four, north of range 10, three east of the fourth principal meridian, in Fulton county, Illinois, and that a summons has been issued out of this court against you, and returned at the July term, A. D. 1882, of said court, holden on the third Monday of July A. D. 1882, at the courthouse in Lewistown, in Fulton county, Illinois.

Now unless you, the said Mary Bennett, Joseph Bennett, Nancy J. Bennett, and the unknown heirs of Angeline Bennett, shall personally be and appear before said county court of Fulton county, on the first day of the September term thereof, to be holden at Lewistown, in said county, on the third Monday of September, 1882, and plead, answer or demur to the said complainant's petition filed therein, the same and the matters and things therein charged and stated will be taken as confessed, and a decree entered against you according to the prayer of said bill.

Lewistown, Illinois, July 21th, 1882.

77a-22-4w

J. C. WOOLEY, Clerk.



Abraham Bennett's Original Land
 Grant in Vermillion Co. IN



Village Cemetery
Mahomet, Illinois





Mackey Cemetery
 Mansfield, Illinois
 Joseph & children buried
 near Bert Coffin grave



Mansfield Illinois Cemetery



Willie and Gadie
Bennett
Died in childhood



Mackey Cemetery
Mansfield, Illinois
Area where Joseph and
children are probably
buried

Oak Grove Church



Sol Coffin - Minnie Sweet
Lizzie Coffin - Francis
Sweet
(left to right)

OAK GROVE CHURCH



Sweet - Coffin OCT 1939 (Grandchildren)

Sweet-Coffin Grandchildren



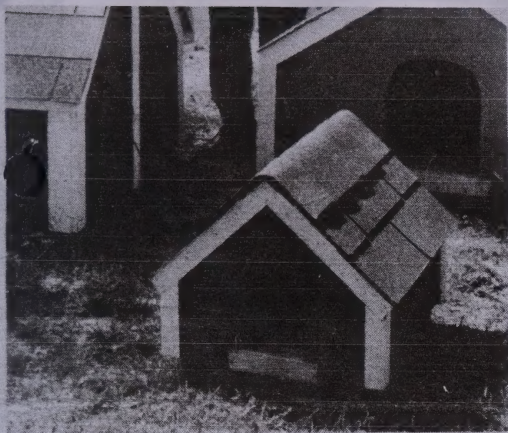
Sweet Family

Berniece, Francis, Mimmie
Olive, Clara, Frances (in
front)

Taken about 1921/22



Bill Coffin Frank Sweet Sol
(1-r) Coffin Willis Coffin



Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Coffin stand near some of the doghouses Mr. Coffin has built. Mr. Coffin suggested they both be in the picture. "After all," he said, "she takes most of the calls and does all the worrying..."

by John Dawson

Six years ago when the doctor ordered Wilbur Coffin to quit driving a truck for his health's sake, he caught the vigorous 72-year old (he is now 78) financially, physically and mentally unready to rest quietly. The result is the unusual collection of doghouses lining the driveway of 508 Franklin, and a "different" kind of enterprise in Mahomet.

Wilbur didn't plan his way into business. It grew gradually from one of several hobbies, and grandchildren and step-grandchildren who wanted Grandpa to "make us something." He started with bird feeders and worked up. And, after the family and immediate neighbor channels are fully stocked, the only outlet is the outside world.

Coffin puts out a good solid product that "is going to outlast any dog." All framework is 2x4, and many of the floors and some of the siding are 2" material. Plywood on floors is 3/4", and on walls and ceilings it is 1/2". At each doorway, a thin piece of metal is nailed over the wood to prevent moisture accumulation and wear by a dog with a chain.

It is advisable to bring along a couple of sturdy neighbors in the pickup when you're coming for

one of the larger models. Mr. Coffin doesn't deliver. If you're in a covered van of any kind, it's also well to remember that the bigger houses are 46" at the peak. The 18"x24" terrier or kitty models will fit into a large auto trunk.

Coffin's materials are used lumber, or more accurately, unused lumber from new sites. He has friends in the contracting business who keep him well supplied.

"Ends" cast aside by conventional carpenters will generally meet his maximum specifications, and the variety of his product sizes virtually insures that no piece of any length will go unused. His inventory, which runs from 25 to 31 houses, will match any prospect from street or kennel.

These savings are passed along to the consumers. Prices range from \$16 for the smallest 18"x24" models, often purchased for cats, to \$75 for Great Dane or St. Bernard units. A German Shepherd could probably get by with \$60.

There is some variety within sizes. Doorways are generally in the center of the front, but some are either to left or right to facilitate turn-arounds. One unit has both ends enclosed with the door at the side. Most of the larger ones have "clean-out" doors on the rear, which can be

other as they eat. The average dining room is a little snug for this.

Usage depends on the whims of the ultimate consumers. One customer bought one of the larger models in which two dogs and a cat dwell happily. Another, who bought a smaller one for a couple of cats, had to come back and purchase a second. One cat had moved in and refused to allow his mate in, and the latter had to spend the night under a bush.

Coffin's only complete strike-out was a St. Bernard who refused to use the house. The owner figured he would move in when it got cold enough. Even with last winter's extremes, the dog never did. The thickly-haired beast would pull the rug out and lie on it, curled up outside his house.

Another Coffin side-line is the "utility" building, 8'x10'. He doesn't plug this extensively for two reasons. His wife, Mary, prefers that he not climb too much, and the peaks of these buildings are generally 10'. Also he can build them competitively, but the cost of out-of-town moving is prohibitive. He now builds these only for local customers who can skid them to the point of use.

Coffin builds in his garage at all times of the year. In extremely cold weather, he has to wait for a nice day to put on the roofs, since the asphalt shingles have to be lapped over at the top, and will crack if it's too cold.

At such times, he can go inside the house and pursue another hobby, painting (oil) pictures and murals. These, too, have reached "outside-the-family" markets, but getting them to places for display and other such details take more time than he is usually willing to give.

Dog house customers tell him he has no competition in this area (Champaign-Urbana doesn't have dog house builder.), and a number of his buildings have been purchased from out-of-state.

Oddly enough, Coffin has never liked dogs. In his early years, he worked the ice route, and a hundred

1956 in Farmer City. One survives.

Also surviving are six sons, Glen and Ray, both of Mahomet, Merle of Farmer City, Carl and David, both of Champaign, Donald of California; four daughters, Mrs. Eunice Barr of Rogers, Ark., Mrs. Irene Bagdanove of California, Mrs. Delores Byington of California, and Mrs. Alma Millage of Champaign; 25 grandchildren; four step-grandsons; seven great-grandchildren; two brothers, Clifford of Champaign and Walt of Urbana; three sisters, Mrs. Aline Burton of Mayview, Mrs. Lavilla Haney of Chicago, and Mrs. Doris Drollinger of Urbana.

He was preceded in death by his parents, four brothers and one sister.

He was a member of the Mahomet Nazarene Church.

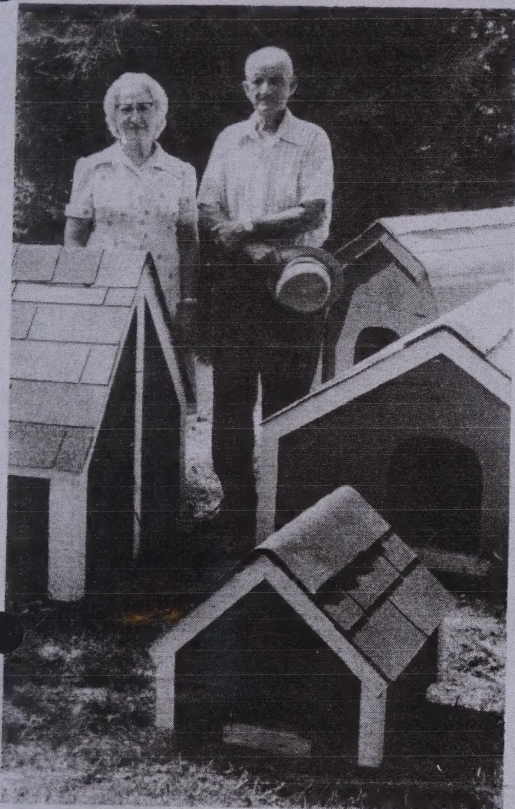
pounds of ice on your shoulders and a dog nipping at your ankles sort of puts you off.

He raised 10 children and never owned a dog. When asked why he caters to them, Coffin laughs and says, "Maybe it's because I think they should be inside something."

At any rate, many a pooch basking snugly in his new home, would probably be grateful — maybe enough to leave Coffin's ankles alone.

Boost the Bulldogs!

In the doghouse. . . business



Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Coffin stand near some of the doghouses Mr. Coffin has built. Mr. Coffin suggested they both be in the picture. "After all," he said, "she takes most of the calls and does all the worrying . . ."

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latched when not in use.

But the customer must choose from the items in stock. Coffin has learned to shy away from "custom" jobs. If the customer fails to show up for an unusual design, it is hard to move.

One such request which he had to refuse was from a woman who had three dogs and two doghouses. She wanted the front to be of wire or screening (hard to move in this climate). The dogs live in the dining room—and Coffin figures that the humans and dogs like to be able to see each other as they eat. The average dining room is a little snug for this.

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Wilbur Coffin

MAHOMET — Wilbur D. Coffin, 80, of Mahomet, died at 5:15 a.m. Wednesday (May 23, 1979) in Burnham City Hospital.

Funeral arrangements are pending with Blair Funeral Home in Mahomet.

Mr. Coffin was born Oct. 22, 1898 in Piatt County, the son of Sol and Mary Elizabeth Coffin. He married Minnie Haney who preceded him in death in 1950. He married Mary McRae Ratcliffe July 3, 1956 in Farmer City. She survives.

Also surviving are six sons, Glen and Ray, both of Mahomet, Merle of Farmer City, Carl and David, both of Champaign, Donald of California; four daughters, Mrs. Eunice Barr of Rogers, Ark., Mrs. Irene Bagdanove of California, Mrs. Delores Byington of California, and Mrs. Alma Millage of Champaign; 25 grandchildren; four step-grandsons; seven great-grandchildren; two brothers, Clifford of Champaign and Walt of Urbana; three sisters, Mrs. Aline Burton of Mayview, Mrs. Lavilla Haney of Chicago, and Mrs. Doris Drollinger of Urbana.

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